

NL



GB 00/1989

4

PCT/GB 00/01407.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

#2

The Patent Office
Concept House
Cardiff Road
Newport
South Wales
NP10 8QQ

I, the undersigned, being an officer duly authorised in accordance with Section 74(1) and (4) of the Deregulation & Contracting Out Act 1994, to sign and issue certificates on behalf of the Comptroller-General, hereby certify that annexed hereto is a true copy of the documents as originally filed in connection with the patent application identified therein.

REC'D 20 JUL 2000

In accordance with the Patents (Companies Re-registration) Rules 1982, if a company named in this certificate and any accompanying documents has re-registered under the Companies Act 1980 with the same name as that with which it was registered immediately before re-registration save for the substitution as, or inclusion as, the last part of the name of the words "public limited company" or their equivalents in Welsh, references to the name of the company in this certificate and any accompanying documents shall be treated as references to the name with which it is so re-registered.

In accordance with the rules, the words "public limited company" may be replaced by p.l.c., plc, P.L.C. or PLC.

Re-registration under the Companies Act does not constitute a new legal entity but merely subjects the company to certain additional company law rules.

Signed

Andrew Gersy

Dated 10 July 2000

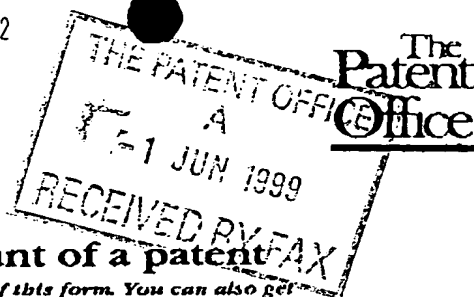
**PRIORITY
DOCUMENT**

SUBMITTED OR TRANSMITTED IN
COMPLIANCE WITH RULE 17.1(a) OR (b)

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

1 Jun. 1999 16:12
Patents Form 1/77

Patents Act 1977
 (16)



01JUN99 E451121-1 D02613
 P01/7700 0.00 - 9912648.4

Request for grant of a patent

(See the notes on the back of this form. You can also get an explanatory leaflet from the Patent Office to help you fill in this form)

The Patent Office

Cardiff Road
 Newport
 Gwent NP9 1RH

1. Your reference

BR/JM/ ES/P01UK

2. Patent

(The Patent)

9912648.4

1 JUN 1999

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant (underline all surnames)

Edward Sweeney

16 Clontarf Drive,

Omagh,

BT78 5BD, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland, UK

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation

7671126001

4. Title of the invention

LOUVRE BLIND WASHING AID

5. Name of your agent (if you have one)

ANSONS

"Address for service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent (including the postcode)

240 Upepr Newtownards Road

Belfast

BT4 3EU

Northern Ireland

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

5572169001

6. If you are declaring priority from one or more earlier patent applications, give the country and the date of filing of the or of each of these earlier applications and (if you know it) the or each application number

Country

Priority application number
 (if you know it)

Date of filing
 (day / month / year)

7. If this application is divided or otherwise derived from an earlier UK application, give the number and the filing date of the earlier application

Number of earlier application

Date of filing
 (day / month / year)

8. Is a statement of inventorship and of right to grant of a patent required in support of this request? (Answer 'Yes' if)

a) any applicant named in part 3 is not an inventor, or

b) there is an inventor who is not named as an applicant, or

c) any named applicant is a corporate body.

See note (d))

1 Jun. 1999 16:12

No. 7721 P. 4

9. Enter the number of sheets for any of the following items you are filing with this form. Do not count copies of the same document

Continuation sheets of this form

Description 3

Claim(s)

Abstract

Drawing(s) 1

10. If you are also filing any of the following, state how many against each item.

Priority documents

Translations of priority documents

Statement of inventorship and right to grant of a patent (Patents Form 7/77)

Request for preliminary examination and search (Patents Form 9/77)

Request for substantive examination (Patents Form 10/77)

Any other documents (please specify)

11. I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.

Signature

Date 01/06/99

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom

Bruce Robertson 01232 656103

Warning

After an application for a patent has been filed, the Comptroller of the Patent Office will consider whether publication or communication of the invention should be prohibited or restricted under Section 22 of the Patents Act 1977. You will be informed if it is necessary to prohibit or restrict your invention in this way. Furthermore, if you live in the United Kingdom, Section 23 of the Patents Act 1977 stops you from applying for a patent abroad without first getting written permission from the Patent Office unless an application has been filed at least 6 weeks beforehand in the United Kingdom for a patent for the same invention and either no direction prohibiting publication or communication has been given, or any such direction has been revoked.

Notes

- a) If you need help to fill in this form or you have any questions, please contact the Patent Office on 0645 500505.
- b) Write your answers in capital letters using black ink or you may type them.
- c) If there is not enough space for all the relevant details on any part of this form, please continue on a separate sheet of paper and write "see continuation sheet" in the relevant part(s). Any continuation sheet should be attached to this form.
- d) If you have answered 'Yes' Patents Form 7/77 will need to be filed.
- e) Once you have filled in the form you must remember to sign and date it.
- f) For details of the fee and ways to pay please contact the Patent Office.

LOUVRE BLIND WASHING AID

This invention relates to a vertical louvre blind washing aid.

A problem exists in the washing of flexible slats or vanes of vertical louvre blinds, the slats being made from material having similar sleeves at the top and bottom ends into which a hanger and a ballaster are respective fitted for each slat.

05 Through use, such slats become dirty, or discoloured by, for example smoking, and periodically require to be cleaned. While this operation can be performed by commercial laundry establishments, in most domestic locations they are cleaned by the householder. Most windows, to which a louvre blind is fitted on a rail across the top of the window, has one or two arrangements of slats. In each
10 arrangement, the slats are connected together by their ballasters being linked by flexible connectors with the hangers being suspended on hooks provided on corresponding slides on the rail and having a common cord control, whereby they can be opened, shut or angled. In the one arrangement version, the slats are opened to one side of the window, and in the two arrangements version, with normally the same
15 number of slats in each arrangement, the slats are opened, one arrangement to each side of the window. Rather than being washed individually, the slats of each arrangement are washed together. Heretofore, one of the means employed by the householder, having removed an arrangement from the rail, is to roll the arrangement of slats (after the hangers, ballasters and connectors have been removed) into a roll
20 and, as a means of preventing axial movement of one slat relative to its neighbours, places one or more elastic bands or ties therearound before placing the roll into the washing machine. While this prevents relative axial movement of the slats, it inhibits the cleaning of the slats in the washing process and is therefore a disadvantage.

An object of the present invention is to obviate or mitigate this disadvantage.

25 Accordingly, the present invention is a washing aid for use in cleaning the flexible slats of a louvre blind, the aid comprising a slat holder whose wall surround is

of openwork to allow passage of fluid therethrough, the holder internally defining a chamber of substantially drum shape whose depth and diameter are substantially the same as a roll of slats to be accommodated therein, the holder being in two parts openable to locate a roll therein and securable together to hold the roll during
5 washing.

Preferably, the holder has an axial core in each part. The core is desirably hollow and perforated or slotted. The securing of the parts together may be by the top of one part of the core having a series of protuberances to be a push fit into a corresponding series of holes in the other part. Alternatively, the outer end of one
10 part of the core may be formed as a socket and the other outer end as a spigot.

Preferably also, the outside of the holder is formed as a sphere or substantially so to assist in the tumbling movements of the aid when located in a washing machine.

An embodiment of the present invention will now be described, by way of
15 example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 shows an exploded perspective view of a washing aid according to the present invention; and

Fig. 2 shows an exploded perspective view of a modified washing aid.

Referring to the drawings, a washing aid for use in cleaning flexible slats of a
20 louvre blind comprises a slat holder 10 whose wall surround 12 is of openwork to allow passage of fluid therethrough and having a perforated plate bottom 8 and top 9. The holder 10 internally defines a chamber of substantially drum shape whose depth and diameter are substantially the same as a roll of slats (not shown) to be accommodated therein. The holder 10 is in two parts 10A, 10B openable to locate a
25 roll therein and securable together to hold the roll during washing.

The holder 10 has an axial core 14. The core 14 is hollow and perforated or slotted. The securing of the parts 10A, 10B together is by the top of one part of the

core 14 having a series of protuberances (not shown) to be a push fit into a corresponding series of holes (not shown) in the other part 10B. Alternatively, the core 14 is in two parts 14A, 14B provided on corresponding parts 10A, 10B, part 14B being of slightly greater depth than part 10B. The outer end of part 14A is formed as a socket and the outer end of part 14B as a spigot to fit inside and be secured in the
5 socket end by push-fitment.

In a first modification as shown in Fig. 2, the outside of the holder 10 is formed as a sphere 20 or substantially so to assist in the tumbling movement of the aid when located in the washing machine.

10 In a second modification (not shown), the core 14 is provided in one part of the holder and a hole is provided in the other part. The core 14 extends slightly more than the axial depth of the holder and at or adjacent to its outer end has one continuous protuberance to be a push fit through the hole.

In use, an arrangement of slats is rolled into a roll and fitted into part 10A of
15 the holder 10 around the core 14 and the part 10B is secured thereto. The holder is then placed in a washing machine and with the machine energised, tumbles around inside.

The slats in the holder 10 are prevented from moving axially relative to each other but can move radially to each other thereby to allow the cleaning fluid in the
20 machine to reach all parts of the slats for cleaning the slats.

Variations and other modifications can be made without departing from the scope of the invention described above.

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)

1/1.

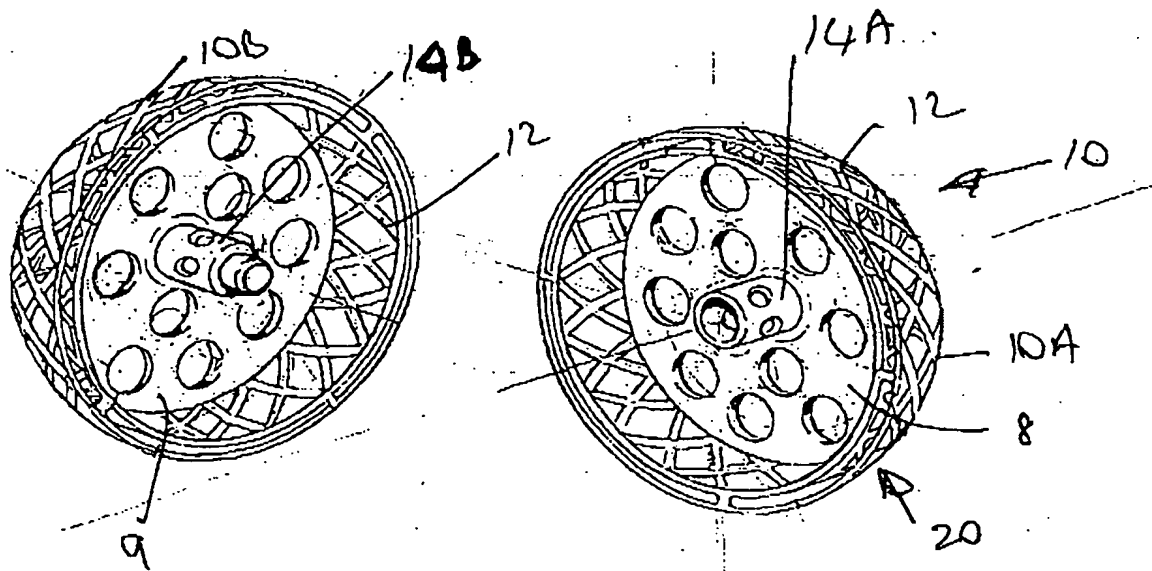
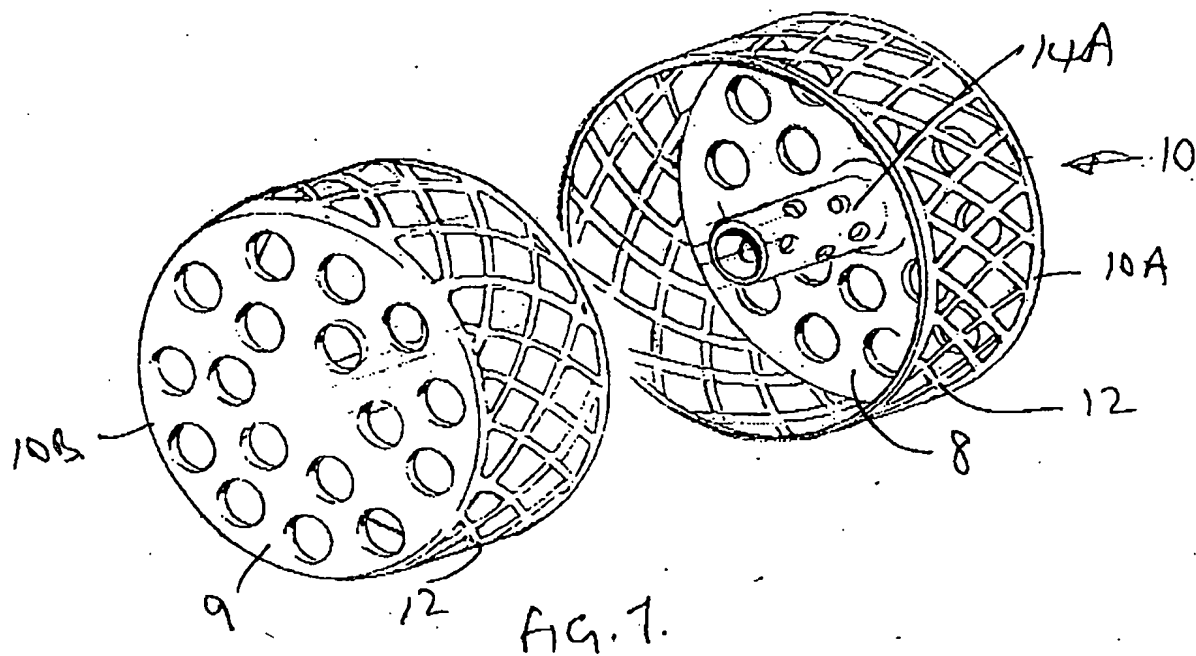


FIG. 2.

ANSONS - 240 Upper Newtownards
29/6/2000 Road,

Belfast.
PCT GB 00 01989

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)